Rural Sanitary District of Whitchurch, Hants

Area in Acres 30,609, Population 5,658 (1891)

Annual Report for the Year Ending December 31st 1898.

Registered Births

Whitchurch District	71
& Workhouse	0
Overton District	80
St. Mary Bourne District	31
Total	182

Deaths

Whitchurch District	39
& Workhouse	10
Isolation Hospital	0
Overton District	34
St. Mary Bourne District	12
Total	95

Comparing this with the previous year we have -

Births	1897	1898	
Whitchurch District -	83	71	decrease 12
Workhouse - - -	3	0	" 3
Overton District -	59	80	increase 21
St. Mary Bourne District -	29	31	" 2
Total	174	182	increase 8

Deaths	1897	1898	
Whitchurch District -	40	39	decrease 1
" Workhouse	11	10	" 1
" Isolation Hospital	1	0	" 1
Overton District -	25	34	increase 9
St. Mary Bourne District -	18	12	decrease 6
Total	95	95	

Of the deaths of Infants under 1 year of age during the Year 1898

Whitchurch gives	6
Overton "	14
St. Mary Bourne "	5
Total	25

of which many are attributable to Premature or weakly Birth, and lived only a few hours, days, or weeks.

The Notification of the Infectious Diseases Act adopted Feb. 1890 shews the following results

New Cases of Notifiable Infectious Diseases

Whitchurch District

Scarlatina	6
Diphtheria	3
Total	9

Workhouse — — — 0

Overton District

Diphtheria	1
Erysipelas	2
Total	3

St. Mary Bourne District

Erysipelas	1

Total in Sanitary Area — 13 as compared with — — 39 in the previous year (the first year of the Isolation Hospital) and 55 in 1896

Deaths from Notifiable Diseases (1898) 1
" 1897 5

The one death being from Diphtheria in Whitchurch

The Year 1895 commenced with a prevalence of Influenza of mild type which afterwards assumed a severe form with Gastric & Intestinal symptoms, cases occurring from time to time till the middle of June; there was again an increase in cases with abdominal symptoms in August and September, since which time it has scarcely been absent from the District. During the year 4 deaths have been attributed to it - 1 in the Workhouse, 1 in Overton, & 2 in St. Mary Bourne, all old & feeble persons. The visitation in the Workhouse was markedly severe. A case of Diphtheria was notified as occurring in a Child 1½ year old in Whitchurch on April 15th and was fatal on the 16th, on which day 2 other cases were notified, one a child of 11 years & the other 2 years, all relations, but living in separate houses, no cause for this outbreak could be ascertained, all were treated at home, & no further development took place, these being the only cases occurring in Whitchurch during the year. A case was notified in August from an outlying cottage in the Overton District, this was supposed to have been contracted in a neighbouring Sanitary Area, it was mild in type and treated at home.

The outbreak of Scarlet Fever of 1897 being effectually stamped out by means of the Isolation Hospital, the whole area had been entirely free from this disease for a period of 12 months, when on November 8th a case was notified from one of 2 outlying cottages in Freefolk Manor, followed by another in the adjoining house on Nov. 21st the first a boy of 7 years & the second a young man of 21 - a lodger -
The first case was removed to the Hospital on the 11th, there being a little delay owing to the reluctance of the Mother to part with the child, but she ultimately accompanied him and remained till the 15th when she returned home well satisfied to leave him in such good quarters -
The second case was removed the same day as notified - On the 24th another case was notified from a bank of 3 cottages half a mile away, a child 7 years of age, this was removed on the 25th. On the 2nd & 3rd Dec. two cases occurred in another of these cottages, one 2¼ & the other 11 years old - these were both removed on the 3rd & on the 9th another child of the same family 4 yrs old was notified, & removed on the 11th
In all 6 cases only are known to have occurred in this outbreak, every one of which was removed to Hospital as soon as practicable.

The origin of this attack could not be traced. The houses were disinfected & the children kept from school. Unfortunately the Mother of these last children had a relative in Whitchurch & whose family the disease was by some means communicated, one child being notified on Jan. 1st & another in the adjoining house on the 3rd, both removed to Hospital the same day as notified.

There latter cases (with respect below) of the year 1899 but are mentioned here as showing the sequence of events.

Of the 3 cases of Erysipelas notified 1 was at St. Mary Bourne & 2 at Overton.

Diarrhoea was somewhat prevalent during the summer & autumn but the health of the district generally has been good, tho' in many places the water supply was scanty owing to the dryness of the season.

I have been in constant communication with the Inspector of Nuisances & continual inspections of the district have been made throughout the year, and many samples of water examined, the several matters requiring attention being duly brought before the District Council & dealt with as required, & it is satisfactory to find that the good improvement is maintained, tho' more help is still required from owners of cottages to see that they are kept in a better condition

than is often the case; possibly the New Vaccination Act under which notice is to be given to the Medical Officer of Health of homes unfit for the performance of vaccination of Infants may have a salutary effect in this direction.

What will be the effect of the Vaccination Act 1898 on the Public Health generally remains to be seen, but at any rate let us hope that the people of this Sanitary area have too much good sense to be led away by the Anti-Vaccination Stage which must surely bring upon our Country a most terrible Disaster with a return of the horrors & disfigurements of the past which some of us can still recount, but of which the majority, who have enjoyed immunity for so many years under the protection of Vaccination, know nothing. What will the disfigured children of the future say when told how their beauty would have remained to them if it had not been for the short-sightedness of their Parents.

While on this subject I would strongly urge that we should be prepared for the almost certain introduction at no very distant date of Small Pox into our area by erecting a small detached building on the ground of the Isolation Hospital suitable for the

A larger question of small Pox Hospitals for combined areas might well be dealt with by the County Council.

immediate reception of one or two patients, otherwise we shall be in a difficulty when the first case is imported. which may be anyday.

In concluding this report I would acknowledge the cordial co-operation & ready help of my Professional Neighbours, coupled with that of the Inspector of Nuisances, & append a summary of work carried out under the supervision of the latter as follows

Houses repaired & whitewashed. 7
do. unfit for occupation but now repaired & improved - - 3
Houses disinfected - 5
Bedding etc disinfected - 5
Overcrowding abated - 3
Drains new & repaired - 13
Catchpits improved 3, cleaned 6
Closets new 5, repaired & improved 7
Wells cleaned out 3, new kerbs & repaired 7
Wells closed. water unfit for use - 1
Certificates granted for water supply 5
River courses cleaned out 3
Bakehouses inspected 11
Pig styes cleaned out & improved 6
Certificates granted under Dairy and Cowsheds order - 1
Cowsheds & Dairies inspected 8
Surroundings of several cottages improved by removal of manure, & heaps of refuse, & filling up of offensive slop-holes.

The slaughter houses & surroundings have been frequently inspected.
A new scavenger's cart has been provided for use at Everton, & 2 pumps with tube wells put up for Public use.
Disinfectants supplied for drains & cesspits & elsewhere as required.

I may add that the Isolation Hospital proved of great service in 2 special instances when free from other cases - one that of a Childrens nurse who had been exposed to Diphtheria during her holidays & whom it was thought desirable to isolate for a week before returning to her situation; & the other that of 4 servants in one household attacked with diarrhoea & febrile symptoms of uncertain type & where the water supply had been shown rendering it desirable that they should be removed. In both these instances the patients were maintained in Hospital by their employers without expense to the District Council.
During the year the verandah to the Hospital has been enclosed by the kindness of the Chairman of the Council which has proved a great boon & rendered comfortable what would have been almost unbearable with the recent weather in such an exposed position -

And I am, Gentlemen
Your Obdt. Servant
Henry Hemsted
Med. Offr. of Health

Janry. 18th. 1899.

Copy

Annual Report
for
The Year Ending
Decr 31st 1898

Whitchurch Hants
R S. O

Henry Kenrick
Med Offr of Health

Jany 1st to 1899